DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 196 593 RC 012 407

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TITLE Rural Education: The Federal Response.
INSTITUTION Department of Education, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 17 Nov 80
NOTE 17p.; Paper presented at the Conference on Rural Education (St. Cloud, MN, November 17, 1980).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Definitions; *Elementary Secondary Education; Extension Education; Federal Regulation; Government Role; *Government School Relationship; *Information Dissemination; Outreach Programs; Research Needs; Rural Areas; *Rural Education; Rural Urban Differences; *Small Schools
IDENTIFIERS Rural Renaissance

ABSTRACT

Increased Department of Education (ED) interest in rural education has been part of the awakening of federal concern for rural American issues. In response to a 1979 Presidential mandate to define and address the needs of rural America, the ED has identified basic problems of rural education that lend themselves to solution by the federal government: poor federal-school communication; ambiguous rural data; lack of rural resources and personnel; and government lack of appropriate strategies, formula, criteria, and procedures for rural education. In addition, for fiscal 1982, the ED has proposed a "Rural Network," an information sharing, technical assistance method of addressing the special needs of rural and small schools. Proposed "Network" services include rural education outreach, locally initiated rural education research, an updated rural data base, extension service models, identification of successful rural practices, and information dissemination. Other recent significant events indicating increased awareness of the importance of rural issues include the funding of a rural school Network by the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, the appointment of rural advocates within ED, an attempt to eliminate anti-rural bias in Office of Education regulations and criteria, and a National Institute of Education study advocating the acceptance of the reality of rural America. (SB)

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ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA

NOVEMBER 17, 1980

RC 012407

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Rural Education: The Federal Response

The President announced a rural initiative December 20, 1979, in a report entitled "Small Community and Rural Development Initiative." This report included an executive mandate to define and address the needs of rural America by rallying the resources of all Departments of the Federal Government. Each Department was to submit a plan for an action agenda.

Fortunately, we in the former Office of Education had already been alerted to rural concerns by aggrieved rural constituencies who had made their views heard through articulate writers and concerned Congressional offices. Consequently, when the President called for action, we in Elementary and Secondary Education were already in action.

In May 1979, we had conducted a National Seminary to develop a rural education Federal agenda. More than 100 rural school administrators, education association executives, and researchers hammered out 28 recommendations describing how the Federal Government might respond to emerging crys from rural and small schools for relief. These 28 recommendations were taken to 10 regional meetings for confirmation by 500 grass-roots participants at the local and State levels.

THIS DELIBERATIVE AND TIME-CONSUMING PROCESS WAS CHOSEN BECAUSE EARLY IN THE LISTENING PROCESS WE PICKED UP SOME SOBERING COUNSEL AS FOLLOWS:

1. THE DATA ON "RURAL INEQUITY" REVEAL A PUZZLING PORTRAIT OF THE RURAL EDUCATION CONDITION BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF A COMMON DEFINITION OF RURAL. THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET (OMB) CLASSIFIES AS RURAL ALL SCHOOL DISTRICTS THAT LIE IN NON-METROPOLITAN COUNTIES THAT ARE NOT PART OF A STANDARD METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA (SMSA) WITH A CITY OF AT LEAST 50,000. THE CENSUS BUREAU REPORTS DEMOGRAPHIC DATA FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITH ENROLLMENTS OVER 300 STUDENTS. THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS USES AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP (ADM) USING TWO DEFINITIONS OF "RURALNESS." THE MUNICIPAL YEAR BOOK 1976 LISTS COUNTIES CONTAINING CITIES OF 10,000 OR LARGER AS URBAN; ALL ELSE IS RURAL. THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE CLASSIFIES A NON-METROPOLITAN COUNTY AS ONE HAVING FEWER THAN 20,000 URBAN RESIDENTS THAT ARE NOT ADJACENT TO A SMSA.

2. SOME OF THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH RURAL INEQUITIES ARE NOT NECESSARILY FEDERALLY-CAUSED NOR ARE THEY AMENABLE TO A FEDERAL REMEDY. STATE POLICIES CONTRIBUTE TO MUCH OF THE RURAL BURDEN. FURTHERMORE, AT THE LOCAL LEVEL IT IS DIFFICULT TO SORT

OUT WHICH GOVERNMENTAL AGENCY IS CAUSING WHICH PROBLEM. THIS FINDING WAS HIGHLIGHTED BY TOM GJELTON'S STUDY FOR THE NATIONAL RURAL CENTER.

3. THERE IS A GREAT FEAR OF MORE FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT IN RURAL AFFAIRS ON THE PART OF MANY VOCAL RURAL EDUCATORS. SOME RECALL THAT PAST FEDERAL RESPONSES TO ARTICULATED EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS HAVE CREATED NEW AND EVEN GREATER BURDENS TO SMALL AND RURAL AREAS. THIS CAME THROUGH LOUD AND CLEAR AT THE TEN REGIONAL ROUNDTABLE.

4. FINALLY, THOUGH RURAL CONSTITUENTS WERE ANGUISHED BY THEIR FRUSTRATIONS WITH CASH SHORTAGES AND PERCEIVED UNFAIRNESS, THEY WERE FOR THE MOST PART UNABLE TO PINPOINT THE EXACT CAUSE OF THEIR PROBLEMS NOR TO ARTICULATE SPECIFIC REMEDIES. A SURVEY OF 500 RURAL SUPERINTENDENTS REVEALED GENERAL COMPLAINTS BUT MANY BLANKS ON EXACT PROVISIONS AFFECTING THEM.

IT WOULD THEREFORE BE PATENTLY FOOLHARDY TO RUSH TO SWEEPING REMEDIES, EVEN IF WE KNEW WHAT THEY WERE. HOWEVER, ALMOST ONE YEAR AFTER THE PRESIDENT'S INITIATIVE, WE HAVE IDENTIFIED SEVERAL CLEARLY BASIC PROBLEMS WHICH LEND THEMSELVES TO SOLUTIONS BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. THESE ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Rural areas and small schools are deprieved of basic communications about Federal programs and opportunities. Their isolation is compounded by their numbers. For example, most States and Federal agencies do not mail notices and applications to small school districts under 600.

2. The data on rural inequity are ambiguous in part because the issue varies with the culture. The Rural Deep South and the Midwest grain belt have obviously different problems and perspectives. Consider for example, the contrast between Mileston, Mississippi and its black sharecropper population and Devils Lake, North Dakota with its huge farms and $60,000 tractors.

3. Small schools do not have the personnel nor resources to seek Federal (nor State) resources competitively, nor to deal with accounting procedures that follow. (These are usually referred as "red tape.")

4. There is a paucity of strategies for addressing the problems associated with the characteristics of ruralness, i.e., isolation, smallness, sparsity, and differentness (rural culture). A concerted search is needed.

5. FINALLY, PRESENT FEDERAL FORMULA, CRITERIA, AND PROCEDURES DO NOT MESH WITH THE CONDITIONS OF RURAL AND SMALL SCHOOL EDUCATION. THIS WAS BEST EXPRESSED BY THE NIE-NATIONAL RURAL CENTER STUDY'S CONCLUSION THAT "THE STRUCTURE OF FEDERAL AID PROGRAMS IS IN SEVERAL RESPECTS NOT WELL-MATCHED TO THE CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS. "...TO THE EXTENT THAT A DISTRICT'S FORTUNES IN RECEIVING FEDERAL FUNDS DEPENDS ON ITS PROPOSAL-WRITING ABILITIES, RURAL SYSTEMS SUFFER BECAUSE OF LACK OF ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL. WHERE SCHOOL SYSTEMS ARE SMALL, THE ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN WHICH FOLLOWS FROM AN INVOLVEMENT IN A FORMULA-BASED FEDERAL AID PROGRAM OFTEN OUTWEIGHS THE ASSOCIATED BENEFITS. NEITHER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NOR RECENT EFFORTS AT PAPERWORK CONTROL AND THE SIMPLIFICATION OF REGULATIONS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ALLEVIATE THOSE DISADVANTAGES. FURTHERMORE, THE EMPHASES ON PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT RATHER THAN PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT AND ON THE DELIVERY OF SERVICES TO RURAL SCHOOLS RATHER THAN ON THE BUILDING OF THE SCHOOLS' SELF-HELP CAPACITY ARE BOTH TENDENCIES WHICH AMOUNT TO A MIS-JUDGEMENT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL NEEDS OF RURAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS...." "THE RESEARCHER, TOM GJELTON FURTHER NOTED THAT IT IS HARD TO SHOW THERE HAS BEEN ANY MALICIOUS NEGLECT OF RURAL EDUCATION IN THIS NATION." GIVEN THESE FINDINGS AS CAVEATS, WHAT CAN BE DONE AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL TO RELIEVE THE RURAL CONCERNS?

THE DEPARTMENT WAS CALLED UPON TO MAKE AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO THE PRESIDENT'S INITIATIVE FOR THE BUDGET YEAR 1982. WE TOOK THE PRUDENT AND RATIONAL APPROACH. BUILDING ON CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND USING AS OUR GUIDELINES THE 28 RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE RESULTS OF SEVERAL SMALL STUDIES OF THE FEDERAL ROLE, THE SECRETARY PROPOSED A 1982 INITIATIVE FOR RURAL EDUCATION REFERRED TO AS "RURAL NETWORK." THE NETWORK CONCEPT CAN BRIEFLY BE DESCRIBED AS AN INFORMATION-SHARING, CAPACITY-BUILDING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE APPROACH TO ADDRESSING THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF SMALL AND RURAL SCHOOLS.

THIS APPROACH DOES NOT PERMANENTLY REJECT SOME OF THE CONTROVERSIAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDRESSING RURAL EDUCATION NEEDS, SUCH AS A RURAL EDUCATION ACT, RURAL SET ASIDES, OR WEIGHTED CRITERIA AND FORMULA.

INSTEAD IT RESPONDS TO WHAT APPEARS TO BE THE MOST OBVIOUS, AND POSSIBLY TO THE REAL GENESIS, OF RURAL EDUCATION PROBLEMS.

IN BROAD OUTLINES, THE ED HAS PROPOSED TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET AT THE REQUEST OF THE PRESIDENT THE FOLLOWING SERVICES FOR FY 1982 UNDER THE CODE WORD "NETWORK."

1. A Rural Outreach Service

This program would fund a rural education outreach office in each State education agency to conduct small and rural school needs assessments, design solutions, develop consortia and linkages, identify resources, and provide technical assistance to help these schools compete more successfully. This might be supplemented by a small grant program for adoption of new practices, technical assistance training or for incentives to attract and keep personnel.

2. Locally-Initiated Rural Research

This would authorize and fund studies to define and explore solutions to the rural and small schools conditions. The studies would focus on schools with enrollments under 600 pupils.

3. Rural Data Base

This would fund updating of present and new information services for rural and small schools. We would join the consortium of Federal agencies supporting the National Rural Center and increase funding of the ERIC/CRESS.

4. Extension Service Models

This would allow agencies or consortia of agencies to design and develop prototype models for the best configuration

OF TAPPING AND COORDINATING ALL AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND DELIVERING THEM IN A EFFICIENT MANNER TO SMALL AND RURAL SCHOOLS. THIS MIGHT BECOME THE EDUCATIONAL EQUIVALENT TO THE SUCCESSFUL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE.

5. RURAL SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

THIS PROGRAM WOULD IDENTIFY, VALIDATE AND DISSEMINATE THESE PRACTICES ON A NATIONAL BASIS AND TIE IN WITH THE NATIONAL DIFFUSION NETWORK. WE CAN ASSUME THAT SOME SMALL AND RURAL SCHOOLS HAVE DEALT SUCCESSFULLY WITH THE RURAL CONDITIONS OF ISOLATION, SPARSITY, SMALLNESS AND DIFFERENTNESS THAT KEEP RURAL SCHOOLS FROM SERVING THEIR PUPILS. THERE ARE ONLY FIVE IN THE NATIONAL DIFFUSION NETWORK.

6. ACTIVATING THE NETWORK

THIS EFFORT WOULD ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF ALIENATION OF RURAL CONSTITUENCIES FROM THE MAINSTREAM OF INFORMATION AND POLICY MAKING. ED WOULD FUND A HOT LINE AND NEWSLETTER TO SMALL SCHOOLS, SPECIAL DRIVE-IN CONFERENCES ON RURAL PROBLEM, REACTOR PANELS, AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS TO RURAL CONSTITUENTS CONCERNING RURAL FEDERAL POLICY AND ACTIVITIES.

SO FAR I HAVE SPOKEN OF A POSSIBLE FUTURE PROGRAM THAT MAY (OR MAY NOT) SURVIVE THE COMPETITION OF NATIONAL PRIORITIES IN A TIME OF BUDGET-BALANCING. EVEN IF THESE PROGRAMS DO NOT

MATERIALIZE IN 1981, THE PAST YEAR CAN BE SAID TO BE THE YEAR-OF-THE-RURAL-AWAKENING. THE PRESIDENT'S INITIATIVE IS SYMBOLIC OF A GENERAL GOVERNMENT-WIDE CONSCIOUS-RAISING ABOUT RURAL ISSUES. ALL AGENCIES HAVE RESPONDED. SOME OF THE RESPONSES TO THIS NEW RURAL AWARENESS FORETELL SOME BASIC AND FAR-REACHING CHANGES IN ATTITUDES AND SUBSEQUENT POLICIES TOWARD RURAL AND SMALL SCHOOLS. SOME OF THE MORE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. THE OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION HAS FUNDED A RURAL SCHOOL NETWORK. WITH THIS GRANT:

- 7,856 SMALL SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS WERE IDENTIFIED. THEIR ADDRESSES WERE PUT ON A COMPUTERIZED MAILING LIST AT AASA.
- A SURVEY OF THESE SUPERINTENDENTS IDENTIFIED 1,600 CREATIVE IDEAS FOR IMPROVING SMALL SCHOOLS. THESE WILL BE CATALOGUED, PUBLISHED AND DISSEMINATED TO THE NETWORK.
- AASA IS COMPILING THE VARIOUS DEFINITIONS OF RURAL PRESENTLY USED BY THE STATES FOR FUTURE STUDY AND POSSIBLE USE FOR FEDERAL POLICY CONSIDERATION.

2. ALL ED PROGRAM ASSISTANT SECRETARIES HAVE APPOINTED PERSONS IN THEIR IMMEDIATE OFFICES TO BE RURAL "ADVOCATES."

THESE PEOPLE HANDLE CONSTITUENT AND CONGRESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AND HAVE CAUSED A GREATER SENSITIVITY TO RURAL NEEDS AND PROBLEMS WITHIN THE AGENCY. (THOUGH THE ENABLING LEGISLATION FOR ED CALLS FOR COORDINATING THE RURAL INITIATIVE IN ONE PLACE, TO DATE THIS HAS NOT BEEN PERMANENTLY ASSIGNED."

3. A SIGNIFICANT SPIN-OFF OF THE RURAL SEMINAR IN 1979 HAS BEEN THE FORMATION OF CONSORTIUM OF PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN THE WASHINGTON, D. C. AREA CONCERNED ABOUT RURAL EDUCATION. THEIR ACRONYM, ORCE, STANDS FOR ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED ABOUT RURAL EDUCATION. THIS INFORMAL GROUP, WHICH INCLUDES HILL STAFFERS, ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVES AND GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL, MEETS MONTHLY TO SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT RURAL ACTIVITIES. THEY SERVE AS A SOUNDING BOARD FOR NEW IDEAS AND PREVENT THE DUPLICATION OF EFFORTS.

4. ALL OFFICES IN OE HAVE BEEN DIRECTED TO REVIEW THEIR REGULATIONS AND CRITERIA WITH A VIEW OF ELIMINATING ANTI-RURAL BIASES. IN OESE WE COOPERATED WITH NIE ON A SMALL BUT SIGNIFICANT IN-HOUSE FIELD STUDY TO DESCRIBE THE IMPACT OF SELECTED PROGRAM POLICIES ON RURAL AND SMALL SCHOOLS. THAT STUDY ENTITLED "THE RURAL EXPERIENCE WITH FEDERAL EDUCATION AID," WAS PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 1980. IT WILL BE USED TO LAUNCH A FURTHER REVIEW AND

EXAMINATION OF REGULATIONS. THIS ACTIVITY IS BEING REINFORCED BY THE SEPTEMBER 19, 1980, PASSAGE OF P.L. 96-354, THE REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ACT EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1981, THIS LAW REQUIRES AGENCIES TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES AS FOLLOWS:

"...(1) THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIFFERING COMPLIANCE OR REPORTING REQUIREMENTS OR TIMETABLES THAT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO SMALL ENTITIES;

"(2) THE CLARIFICATION, CONSOLIDATION, OR SIMPLICATION OF COMPLIANCE AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE RULE FOR SUCH SMALL ENTITIES;

"(3) THE USE OF PERFORMANCE RATHER THAN DESIGN STANDARDS."

5. THIS FALL NIE SPONSORED A SMALL WORKING CONFERENCE TO EXPLORE THE USE OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY TO SERVE RURAL SCHOOLS. ALSO, THE OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN OCTOBER FUNDED A NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON "LINKING EDUCATION AND WORK." THESE CONFERENCE REPORTS SHOULD BE INSTRUCTIVE FOR FUTURE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EFFORTS.

6. IN SEPTEMBER THIS YEAR PAUL M. NACHTEGAL COMPLETED A NIE STUDY ENTITLED "IMPROVING RURAL SCHOOLS." WHICH INCLUDES

OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS FOLLOWING FIELD VISITS TO 14 RURAL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS. HE MAKES A PLEA FOR ACCEPTING THE REALITY OF RURAL AMERICA - A PRE CONDITION TO ANY REFORM OF FEDERAL POLICY.

THAT MEANS:

"... o ACCEPTING THE FACT THAT RURAL COMMUNITIES AND SCHOOLS ARE DIFFERENT FROM URBAN COMMUNITIES AND SCHOOLS.

o ACCEPTING THE FACT THAT RURAL COMMUNITIES DIFFER FROM EACH OTHER AND THAT INTERVENTIONS TO IMPROVE RURAL EDUCATION MUST RECOGNIZE THOSE DIFFERENCES.

o ACCEPTING THE FACT THAT RURAL SCHOOLS AND RURAL COMMUNITIES OPERATE AS A SINGLE, INTEGRATED SOCIAL STRUCTURE.

o ACCEPTING THE FACT THAT DOING THINGS TO OR FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES IS INCONSISTENT WITH RURAL TRADITION.

ACCEPTING RURAL REALITY MEANS MOVING FROM A GENERIC PUBLIC POLICY OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TO A MORE DIFFERENTIATED POLICY, ONE THAT ALLOWS AND ASSISTS RURAL SCHOOLS AND RURAL COMMUNITIES TO BUILD ON THEIR STRENGTHS AND OVERCOME THEIR WEAKNESSES. ACCEPTING RURAL REALITY MEANS CREATING PUBLIC POLICY THAT VALUES AND ACCOMMODATES RURAL CULTURES AND RURAL SCHOOLS, RATHER THAN TRYING TO RESHAPE THOSE INSTITUTIONS INTO A LIKENESS OF LARGER SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES...."

THIS NEW AWARENESS OF THE REALITY OF RURAL SCHOOLS IS SLOWLY BUT SURELY PERMEATING THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF FEDERAL POLICYMAKERS. IT WILL BE FELT IN MANY SMALL BUT SIGNIFICANT WAYS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE PENDING LEGISLATION ON THE YOUTH ACT IS BEING STUDIED TO DETERMINE THE EFFECTS OF THE FORMULA ON SMALL SCHOOLS. AS A RESULT OF THE SPECIAL DESEGREGATION PROBLEMS OF RURAL LEAS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF ESAA PROGRAM MANAGERS, THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY EXPRESSED THE POSSIBILITY OF A RURAL SET-ASIDE IN THE SPECIAL PROJECTS PROGRAM. THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION INSTITUTED A SET ASIDE FOR RURAL HANDICAPPED PROJECTS EARLIER THIS YEAR. IN THE COURSE OF WRITING THE NEW ASBESTOS HAZARDS ACT REGULATIONS, THE UNIQUE CONDITIONS OF SMALL SCHOOLS WERE RECOGNIZED BY SOFTENING THE COMPLIANCE STANDARDS. THE ESEA TITLE I PROGRAM HAS APPOINTED A PROGRAM OFFICER TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO RURAL SCHOOLS.

OTHER CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING TO THE RURAL CONDITION WILL OCCUR AS RURAL CONSTITUENTS PRESS THEIR CAUSE AND AS NEW INSIGHTS INTO THE RURAL PROBLEM ARE GAINED.

BUT THIS BRINGS ME TO THE FINAL CAVEAT. A SOBERING QUESTION HAUNTS ME EVEN AS WE TALK OPTIMISTICALLY ABOUT FUTURE PLANS FOR THE RURAL EDUCATION. IT WAS ASKED AT A RURAL MEETING LAST YEAR.

IT WAS THIS: "WHAT HAPPENDED TO THE PAST RURAL INITIATIVES - THE 1974 ONE, FOR EXAMPLE"? I WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE AND I DO BELIEVE, THAT THIS EFFORT WILL BE THE ONE THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE. THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT THIS WILL BE THE CASE. BUT I NEED NOT REMIND YOU THAT THE "SQUEAKY WHEEL GETS THE GREASE."

NECESSARILY, IT SEEMS, WE STRESS THE NEGATIVE WHEN WE DESCRIBE OUR PROBLEMS. I WISH TO EMPHASIZE THAT WHATEVER IS SAID AND WHATEVER IS DONE SHOULD IN NO WAY DESTROY THE PRESENT STRENGTHS AND ADVANTAGES OF RURAL SCHOOLS.

SOME OF THESE ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- RURAL SCHOOLS OFTEN EXPOSE YOUNG PEOPLE TO A WHOLE SPECTRUM OF SOCIAL VARIATION THAT ENCOURAGES COOPERATION AMONG THOSE WHO MIGHT NOT INTERACT ELSEWHERE. THEY SERVE THE SOCIAL INTEGRATION FUNCTION IN A DEMOCRACY.

- RURAL SCHOOLS PROVIDE TEACHERS WITH FREQUENT INTERACTION WITH EACH CHILD, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION. SUCH PEDAGOGICAL INNOVATIONS ARE REALLY A TRADITIONAL PART OF RURAL EDUCATION AS ARE OTHER INNOVATIONS SUCH AS NON-GRADED CLASSES, CROSS-AGE TEACHING AND OPEN CLASSROOMS. THIS OFTEN LEADS TO GREATER PUPIL PARTICIPATION AND SATISFACTION.

- Inadequate financial bases force rural schools to utilize whatever resources they have more efficiently thus avoiding the waste some large bureaucratic urban schools. Rural schools are often very cost effective.

- Rural schools often serve as the cultural, social as well as intellectual center for rural people. They nurture the community and give the people a sense of belonging and caring.

I therefore agree with the President who said in announcing the rural initiative:

"Rural Americans have extra-ordinary creativity, dedication and perseverance - the role of the Federal Government should be to encourage and support the resources and resourcefulnss of rural America and be a partner of its local leaders."

I will do all I can to see to it that rural schools get their fair share of Federal resources. Together, as partners - the interests of children in rural America will be better served.